

## **Questions and Answers**

**Q:** Why was this change put into place?

**A:** Requestors had established seventy-eight different priorities for the personnel security investigations (PSI) conducted by Defense Security Service (DSS) That number obviously diluted the concept and impact of priorities; in addition, the priorities did not necessarily represent the better interests, comparatively, of all of the Department of Defense. Within DSS, the mere identification of priority cases was draining the resources needed to get the cases completed. Something had to be done to rationalize the process.

**Q:** How was the change decided?

**A:** Two meetings were convened by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Security and Information Operations) (DASD(S&IO)) with the various DoD Components to develop a more current and realistic listing of DoD mission critical priorities.

**Q:** What are the timelines associated with the various categories of priority investigations?

**A:** Because of the uncertainty as to the total number of requests that would appear in each tier, it is not now possible to project the workload sufficiently to identify appropriate timelines with any degree of reasonableness.

**Q:** Will this new prioritization policy increase the time to complete routine requests for investigation?

**A:** During the startup phase of the implementation of the new priorities, DSS expects that the resources available to handle routine investigative requests will decrease. However, that situation should clarify within six to twelve months and allow a better assessment of impact on overall completion times.

**Q:** What is the purpose of the fourth tier?

**A:** Tier 4 reflects all other cases and was added to permit requesters the ability to assign some level of priority within this category, albeit not at the level of tiers 1-3.

**Q:** Why not cite one of the categories to gain expeditious handling for a case that does not fall into one of the approved categories?

**A:** Requesters must be judicious in assigning priorities to cases, ensuring they do so only for those individuals who truly require such access in the course of their assigned duties and meet the definitions for each priority. If excessive numbers of priority cases are received, investigative lapse times will increase. Similarly, even though a PSI may fall into one of the categories, the needs of the job may not require priority handling. You should exercise discretion in declaring a request to be a priority. The normal course of investigations will usually develop information that validates the basis for the priority requirements. DSS will collect and act on information that shows a pattern of invalid requests

**Q:** What will happen if I don't include a priority code in an investigative request?

**A:** It will be handled as a routine request. The assignment of a priority category is the responsibility of the requester. With the use of automated processing, manual intervention by DSS to screen for uncoded priority requests is not practical.

Q: Will DSS include proper implementation of this priority procedure in its oversight of cleared contractors?

A: Yes. This is part of the process that governs contractor personnel security actions. DSS oversight will include coverage during security reviews and analysis of requests and requirements.

Q: What do I do if the case category of my submission is included in the list of investigative priorities but is not reflected in module 4 of the DD1879 or module 6 of the NAC Security Information Sheet?

A: Until implementation of EPSQ version 2.2 , you may only request prioritization of the following case categories:

Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI) (DD1879)

Nuclear Personnel Reliability Program (PRP) (NAC Security Information Sheet)

Presidential Support (DD1879)

NATO (DD1879 or NAC Security Information Sheet)

Q: When EPSQ version 2.2 is released where will I enter the two-place priority designator?

A: EPSQ version 2.2 will collect this designator under the Certify - Certify User Form menu item. The Certification screen will contain an edit area entitled "Special Project Code (Not required unless applicable)".